



# MINUTES

## International Relations Committee of the Legislative Council

March 18, 2008

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### MEMBERS PRESENT:

Senator Daryl Beall, Chairperson

Representative McKinley Bailey,  
Vice Chairperson  
Representative Richard Anderson  
Representative Swati Dandekar  
Representative Helen Miller

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## MEETING IN BRIEF

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- I. Procedural Business
- II. Drake University
- III. Iowa State University
- IV. Iowa Council for International Understanding
- V. Materials Filed With the Legislative Services Agency



## International Relations Committee of the Legislative Council

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### I. Procedural Business

**Call to Order.** Chairperson Beall called the meeting to order at 12:07 p.m. on March 18, 2008, in Room 24 of the Statehouse. The meeting adjourned at 1:08 p.m.

**Quorum.** There were insufficient members present to constitute a quorum. The members present engaged with those making presentations and deferred taking any official actions.

**Opening Remarks.** Chairperson Beall stated that Iowans have more passports per capita than any other citizens of a state in the union. He stated that it is important for the Committee to be aware of the international programs and outreach that are going on in the state.

### II. Drake University

**International Focus.** Dr. David Maxwell, President of Drake University, discussed Drake's two international focuses: global education, which means an international perspective that can be provided to students on campus, and international education, which means studying and experiencing life abroad. Dr. Maxwell informed the Committee that Drake's mission statement includes helping students become responsible global citizens, which means recognizing three things. First, students are graduating into a world where national boundaries are increasingly irrelevant. Second, more jobs are likely to interact with foreign cultures. Third, students should seek—and many are seeking—to prepare for and be responsible for common good on a global scale.

**Center for Global Citizenship.** Professor David Skidmore, Director of the Center for Global Citizenship, stated that the mission of the center is to help all students with understanding of and competency in global cultures. The center sponsors and cosponsors dozens of campus activities each year. The center also features the Global Ambassador Program, which is a complementary academic certificate program to the student's degree program. The certificate program requires an international focus. The center also assists faculty to develop international skills and knowledge with research and training, leading to new and revised classes focusing on international subjects. The center is also responsible for a new minor at Drake in global public health.

**International Programs.** Ms. Gretchen Olson, Director of International Programs, explained to the Committee that international programs includes advising students majoring in international programs, operating a small English-as-a-second-language program, and assisting students studying abroad. This school year, Drake has 354 international students from 66 countries studying on campus, a record number. There are 120 Drake students studying in 29 countries, including Costa Rica, Jordan, Thailand, and Argentina; this is also a record number.

Representative Richard Anderson commented that the number of Drake students going abroad seemed low and asked if the university has a plan to increase numbers. Dr. Maxwell replied that Drake has a goal of having 20 percent of graduating students going abroad. Dr. Maxwell also mentioned two impediments for students who want to go abroad. The first is that 65 percent of Drake's students are in professional programs, which are set up in sequential class programs and that makes it difficult for students to find a semester or period of time to go abroad and then step back into the program. The second major issue for many students according to Dr. Maxwell is



financial. It can be very expensive to study abroad, particularly if Drake does not have a reciprocal cost agreement with the school that the student is attending. Dr. Maxwell also mentioned another issue for universities and employers—that many international students who would like to stay after graduation are not allowed to due to the immigration system.

**International Students.** Ms. Leslie Mamoorian, Associate Director of International Admissions, told the Committee that Drake is a popular university for international students, including immigrants with academic credentials and U.S. students who live abroad for various reasons. Drake is also popular for its actuarial science program, particularly with countries that have begun to grow insurance industries, such as China. Other countries with high numbers of students at Drake include Malaysia and Ghana. She told the Committee that there are more than 7,700 international students in the state, bringing more than \$1 million to the economy every year. She also discussed the Study Iowa Consortium, which is a group of private colleges and universities pooling resources to advertise and recruit students internationally.

**Chinese Cultural Exchange.** Mr. Kirk Martin, Director of Chinese Cultural Exchange Program, discussed several programs open to both students and college graduates, including teaching English in China. The program's mission is to build relationships between Iowans and Chinese young people, recognizing the importance of China in the future.

### III. Iowa State University

**Overview.** Mr. Andrew Baumert, Interim Executive Director, State Board of Regents, and State Relations Officer, Iowa State University, introduced Dr. Max Rothschild, distinguished professor of animal science.

**International Programs.** Dr. Rothschild told the Committee that an international perspectives course is required for most majors at the university. The school also offers an enormous array of study abroad opportunities. The Study Abroad Center offers courses to prepare students to go overseas for both short-term and long-term stays. The university accounts for about one-third of all of the international students present in the state from more than 100 countries. The university is partnered with business collaborators from other countries and U.S. businesses with international interests. This extension and service work is good for the economy of the country and Iowa.

Dr. Rothschild said that the university is a draw for its union of agricultural research and engineering school. He said that with student and faculty exchanges come new ideas, talent, and money. He said that the university's goal is to have 50 percent of students study abroad. He also said that the university is encouraging students to develop language skills.

Dr. Rothschild also discussed the Volunteer Service Learning Program, which increases understanding for students that much of the world is not as well off as the United States is. He shared an example from the program of students who assist people in Uganda learning how to raise livestock, such as pigs. This is an enterprise which will provide a family income, food, security, and pride.

**Discussion.** Representative Dandekar asked both Iowa State University and Drake University officials about advertising in countries, such as India. She remarked that she had not seen Iowa



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advertising in some of the ways she has observed other states advertising. Ms. Mamoorian remarked that the Study Iowa Consortium has a three-step methodology to bring students to Iowa. The members identify a region of the world to focus on; then the members seek out leaders, advisors, and professionals in education to network with and possibly bring to the state in order to begin forging relationships with them; and third, members visit the area and begin looking to attract students. Ms. Mamoorian commented that because the efforts of the consortium are privately funded, the efforts are more targeted.

### IV. Iowa Council for International Understanding

**Overview.** Chairperson Beall introduced Ambassador Mary Kramer, noting her service as President of the Iowa Senate prior to serving as U.S. Ambassador to Barbados 2004 through 2006. Ambassador Kramer told the Committee that the council's mission is to build cultural understanding at home and abroad, one person at a time. The board of directors is comprised of international professionals working in Iowa, volunteers, and advocates of international and immigrant peoples.

**Translation Services.** The council provides translation services on a 24-hour, 7-days-a-week basis to health and law enforcement officials on a fee basis. The council has joined with the Des Moines Area Community College to provide translators with training to help with technical terms so that the translators can be licensed or certified as appropriate. Ambassador Kramer stated that the need for translators is great in the state and the need is only growing.

**Visitors.** The council is a conduit for international visitors to the state. Iowa is a popular destination, particularly for visiting farms. Currently, the U.S. State Department pays for these visitations, but there are expenses that are not covered and volunteers make up the difference. The council also sponsors Passport to Prosperity, which recognizes the successes and contributions of refugees to the community. The council also assists and counsels families that are moving here from abroad. Many family members have trouble adjusting to everyday life when a spouse relocates for a job.

### V. Materials Filed With the Legislative Services Agency

The following materials were distributed in connection with the meeting and are filed with the Legislative Service Agency.

1. Protocol for Hosting International Visitors at the Iowa General Assembly.
2. Drake University packet of materials.
3. Dr. Max Rothschild, Iowa State University, presentation slides.